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**CONTROVERSIAL
MAYOR TALKS WITH
METRO ABOUT THE
YEAR THAT WAS** {page 2}

BIG SHOOTER

MOOSEHEAD TO LEAD TEAM ATLANTIC

{page 26}



HALIFAX

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Weekend, December 23-25, 2011
www.metronews.ca



News worth sharing.

A white Christmas? Who knows

► Halifax last saw snow on Christmas in 2009, with five centimetres on the ground



ALY THOMSON
HALIFAX@METRONEWS.CA

Whether or not we'll see the white stuff on the ground on Christmas Day is about as predictable as the flip of a coin, according to Environment Canada.

Friday's forecast calls for about five centimetres of snow, or five millimetres of rain in Halifax beginning in the morning.

But determining whether the ground will be wet, or wet and white, hinges on the temperature, said Tracey Talbot, a meteorologist with Environment Canada.

"It's kind of iffy as to whether or not the snow will stay on the ground," she said Thursday. "It's going to be right around 0 C, and if the temperatures are a little above zero, we could see some melting."

What are the odds?

► From 1991 to 2009, Halifax averaged a 47 per cent chance of having at least two centimetres of snow on the ground by 7 a.m. Christmas Day.

So if you're dreaming of a white Christmas, start begging the weather Gods for below-freezing temperatures.

"Once this system goes through, temperatures will be dropping. So whatever is still on the ground by (Friday) afternoon should stick around for Christmas," said Talbot.

"But plus or minus a degree is going to make a huge difference in whether it's rain or snow."

Inland regions of Nova Scotia should expect to see flakes rather than drops on Friday, she added.



► A jogger passes by a sign on the Clay Café window as he runs down Quinpool Road on Thursday. Those dreaming of a white Christmas may get their wish.

Local tweets



Here's what Haligonians are saying about the weather:

► **@TheIainJosey:** Dreaming of a white Christmas? Sorry to burst your bubbles but it's probably not gonna happen. At least not here #hfx

- **@leanne_em:** 2-4cm of snow (Friday)! hope those little flakes can survive until christmas morning #dreamingofawhitechristmas #halifax
- **@Woodgar:** Ok #halifax, let's do a snow dance so we can have a white christmas and happy skiers and boards this holiday season!
- **@EmmaJWhalen:** I'm dreaming

of a white christmas... #ohwait that will never happen because I live in #Halifax.

► **@PrinMB:** Maybe Halifax will have a white Christmas after all. That would be nice :)

► **@myweeview:** Dec. 25th is the only day I want a touch of snow! Can't believe the warm weather! #Halifax



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news



Hold on tightly to your significant other: experts say 'tis the season to be jilted. Scan code for story.

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On the web at metronews.ca

A driver has a terrifying near-miss with a jack-knifing transport truck on a Russian highway. Watch at metronews.ca/video

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A great and not-so-great year, the mayor reflects

► Peter Kelly sits down for year-end chat with Metro Halifax ► Plenty of controversy surrounding HRM's mayor in 2011 ► Kelly and council return on Jan. 10

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO FILE

► Mayor Peter Kelly goes for a skate around the Canada Games Oval in this file photo from January.



JENNIFER TAPLIN
@METRONWS.CA

It's rare to see Mayor Peter Kelly so relaxed.

He's wearing jeans and a blue fleece as he sips green tea from his usual clear mug in one of the comfy chairs in his office on Thursday.

There is still work to do before Christmas but Kelly sat down for half an hour to talk to Metro Halifax about the scandals and triumphs of 2011 — and about what's coming in the new year.

Here are the mayor's remarks, edited only for space.

Q: First of all, what are your reflections of 2011?

A: It's been a great year and it's been a not-so-great year. There are some great events and outcomes this year, but also on the flip-side of that there were some challenges that we had to face that we could

have done better.

Q: With criticism over the concert-cash scandal and in-camera meetings, was 2011 one of the worst years you've had as mayor?

A: We had the best Canada Games ever and we have two strong legacy pieces: the Canada Games Centre and the people's oval.... I certainly stumbled in my enthusiasm to help secure world-class entertainment for our community. Certainly, I indicated that mistakes were made and certainly (we) learned from those mistakes.

Q: How do you feel about the milestone of being Halifax's longest-serving mayor?

A: I'll tell you right up: I don't give it any thought. Basically you just do the job that you believe you have to do in which to meet the public's expectations.

"It's no longer an 'if' situation. It's a 'when' situation."

MAYOR PETER KELLY ON THE PROPOSED STADIUM

Q: This is a tough job and it takes its toll on you from stress, long hours and criticism. Why would you want to do this job?

A: For the love of the job and the love of the community. I like to try to bring forward change and new initiatives. I like to make sure we stay focused on the future for our youth and their children's children.

Q: There's an election coming in 2012 and polls show your popularity has dipped. What do you see coming in the election?

A: There is going to be 16 councillors and the mayor, so it will be a smaller council, and I think that's a good move in a

good direction.... I think you'll get more competition for the seats and for the mayor. I don't think there will be any acclamations this time, I don't see any at the onset.... And with the mayor's position there's up to seven people, as you've heard, and so it will certainly be challenging, as all elections are and should be. Certainly one that will keep people focused on that discussion.

Q: If there ends up being no convention centre, will it mean there's definitely money for a stadium?

A: Nope. I still feel positive about the prospects of a convention centre. It will add to the vibrancy and transform the downtown when you have a half-billion (dollar) project. The stadium is the last piece of sport-and-entertainment asset that we don't have. All of the other major urban areas across the country have a stadium and we do not.

No new digs for smaller council

When the number of councillors is reduced from 23 to 16 after next year's municipal election, there will be serious vacancies around the council table at city call.

There are rumours of renovations or moving council meetings into another building, but Peter Kelly says no way.

"It's already wired and useable as it is. I don't think we need to invest money in new chambers," he said.

He suggested the directors of the various municipal offices like finance and infrastructure could sit in the vacant seats.

● JENNIFER TAPLIN

'Employer' of illegal workers not allowed to leave country

▶ Canada Border Services began executing search warrants Tuesday as part of the ongoing investigation

ALY THOMSON
HALIFAX@METRONEWS.CA

A man accused of bringing illegal workers to Halifax is not permitted to leave the country but will be allowed to stay in Toronto until his next court appearance in February.

Iftach Jacob appeared in Halifax provincial court Thursday and was released on a \$7,500 bond and must return to an address in Toronto.

He's also to report to the Canada Border Services Agency office in Mississauga, Ont., every Friday beginning next week.

The CBSA alleges Jacob brought foreign workers to Canada illegally and was working without permission himself.

He is one of 11 people arrested in an immigration sweep conducted this week by the agency, but the Israeli man's charges are stiffer than the others.

That's because the CBSA alleges Jacob was "functioning in more of



▶ Iftach Jacob at court on Thursday.

an employer category," defence lawyer Lee Cohen said outside the courtroom Thursday.

Ten other foreign nationals from Israel were arrested after raids on a home and kiosks at three HRM shopping malls — Mic Mac Mall, Scotia Square and Bedford Place Mall.

They were all working for Heat in a Click, selling gel heating pads to Christmas shoppers.

Price said the group was also selling the devices at the Greenwood

Mall in the Annapolis Valley last week.

Nissan Shitrit, who was remanded on Wednesday, did not appear in court Thursday, but was released on \$1,000 bail under the same conditions as Jacob.

Eight others pleaded guilty Wednesday to working in Canada without authorization, and each was ordered to pay a \$1,000 fine.

Cohen speculated those eight were regarded as "low-level operatives."

An 11th person was arrested Thursday, and Crown attorney Tom McLaughlin said the man will appear in court no earlier than Friday.

Albert Price, manager of the agency's criminal investigations division, said the foreign nationals were visiting Canada and did not appear to have work permits.



For more local news, visit metronews.ca/halifax



▶ Canada Border Services agents arrest a man outside Halifax Provincial Court on Thursday. The man was the 11th person arrested in a crackdown on illegal workers in HRM.

11th person booked in sweep

ALY THOMSON
@METRONEWS.CA

The 11th person arrested in connection with an immigration sweep conducted this week in Halifax will likely face similar charges to the 10 others preceding him, a Crown lawyer said.

"I would assume, and it is only an assumption based on the other files,

that it will be similar to what was before the court already with the other 10 individuals," said Crown lawyer Tim McLaughlin outside of court on Thursday.

The man was arrested Thursday outside Halifax provincial court in the late morning by Canada Border Service Agency officers.

The other 10 were arrest-

ed Wednesday, either for working without authorization or for hiring people without authorization.

For the latter, a conviction could lead to jail for up to two years or a fine of up to \$50,000, said McLaughlin.

McLaughlin would not say which category the latest arrested man may fall under.

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RYAN TAPLIN/METRO

► Members of the New Brunswick speed-skating team power their way around the oval in February.

Sydney eyeing oval of its own

► Halifax's popular skating oval to open Friday, weather permitting

The concept of a public skating oval has been brought to the attention of the consultant who is developing the blueprints for the post-industrial use of the tar-ponds and coke-ovens sites in Sydney.

Owen Fitzgerald, executive director of the Unama'ki Economic Benefits Office, recently began calling for the establishment of a skating oval at the Sydney tar-ponds site after the current remediation project is completed.

Fitzgerald said he was motivated by discussion within his own family of the desire for a facility similar to the oval that is about to open on the Halifax Common.

A Facebook page set up to promote the concept in Sydney has attracted just over 200 supporters.

Fitzgerald said refrigeration units would make it possible to skate in temperatures up to 10 C. He suggested the remediated tar-ponds site because of its central location, availability of land and a chance to tap into the tar-ponds legacy fund to cover costs associated with the oval.

Fitzgerald said he has also received calls of support. "Perhaps this can be the beginning of a larger conversation," he said. "Perhaps the transformation of the infamous tar ponds can be the stimulus for the

transformation of Sydney."

Meggan Desmond, communications officer with the Sydney Tar Ponds Agency, said the idea of an oval has been brought to Stantec Consulting Ltd., which was recently awarded a \$1.48-million contract to provide the engineering design plans for future projects at the sites following completion of the \$400-million effort to remediate toxins left over from a century of steelmaking.

The designers want to get feedback from the community regarding the support for such a facility, Desmond said. The concept would fit in with one of the intended future uses of the site — to provide recreational facilities and support active living.

CAPE BRETON POST

Tar-ponds site

- The design for the tar-ponds site calls for a commons area with an outdoor concert venue to accommodate up to 10,000 people, a trail network with bridges and boardwalks connecting downtown Sydney, Whitney Pier and Ashby, and other recreation facilities.
- The coke-ovens site would be home to a business park that would allow for commercial and light industrial development.

Friday, December 23

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the **Bay**

Cops have few leads on shots fired

Police are investigating a firearm discharge in the downtown core overnight Wednesday, but they don't have much to go on.

At 7:40 a.m. on Thursday, Halifax Regional Police were called to the 1800 block of Granville Street at the CIBC building regarding what was believed to be property damage caused by a pellet gun.

But police investigators later determined a gun was the weapon used after shell casings were located, along with one bullet hole in the building.

"We determined it was a firearm, but we don't know what happened,"

Know anything?

- Anyone with information about the shooting is asked to contact police or Crime Stoppers.

said police spokesman Const. Brian Palmetter. "We don't know if someone was shooting at a person, vehicle or the building."

Police also don't have an exact time to when the shooting took place, only that it happened during the overnight hours. No one reported any gunfire in the area and there were no reported injuries.

● PHILIP CROUCHER

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BUILDING UP, OPTIMISM DOWN

A question of confidence

Consumer confidence is plummeting, but construction confidence is rising in HRM.

Mayor Peter Kelly said permits for new buildings are approaching last year's high.

As of Dec. 22, there were 4,773 permits issued this year for construction projects of more than \$790 million. Just a few more permits issued before the end of the year would push that figure to more than \$800 million and a new record.

"It's confidence in the community, confidence in the growth patterns throughout HRM and confidence in a strong future," Kelly said. "People would not be spending this kind of money if they didn't have the confidence that they see in this municipality."

Speaking of confidence — except on

By the numbers

Total building permits in HRM:

- 2010: 4,609
- 2011: 4,773

Commercial:

- 2010: 798 permits worth \$188 million
- 2011: 895 permits worth \$230.5 million

Residential:

- 2010: 3,158 permits worth \$503 million
- 2011: 3,164 permits worth \$510 million

Industrial:

- 2010: 12 permits worth \$13 million
- 2011: nine permits worth \$3.2 million

the flip side — the Conference Board of Canada says consumer confidence is at its lowest point in more than two and a half years.

The biggest drop is in Atlantic Canada, wiping out a recent gain after the Halifax Shipyard won a \$25-billion shipbuilding contract in the fall.

● JENNIFER TAPLIN/WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Border cops seize \$2M in heroin

► About 150,000 containers a year go through Halifax port ► Heroin container was targeted by police, who zeroed in on contents with X-rays



JENNIFER TAPLIN
@METRONEWS.CA

Two million dollars worth of heroin was discovered in a cargo container in Halifax, bound for Toronto.

Border services agents made the discovery on May 16, but could not release details until now because of an RCMP investigation.

Dominic Mallette, with the Canada Border Services Agency, said Thursday that the shipment came from India and was destined for Toronto. It was flagged because of its origin, and the container was X-rayed.

"We examined the entire container, in which there were 772 cardboard boxes (and inside those) were various food prod-

5 Border services in Halifax make four to five significant drug busts each year.

ucts," he said.

Two of the boxes held 19 bags of heroin hidden inside sacks of flour, something the X-ray picked up because of the difference in consistency. The five kilograms of heroin seized is worth about \$2 million on the street, police said.

"This was a targeted container from our targeting unit here in Halifax," Mallette told reporters at a press conference. "We look at different things such as country of origin, the routing, where it stopped on the way as well as whether it was a first-time importer."

The drugs were turned over to local RCMP, who



► Dominic Mallette of the Canada Border Services Agency releases details of a major drug bust on Thursday..

passed them on to their colleagues in Toronto.

Sgt. Richard Rollings, spokesman for Toronto RCMP, said the investigation was transferred to the Toronto jurisdiction because that's where the drugs were headed.

No charges have been laid and the investigation is ongoing.

Rollings could not divulge whether the container had been sent on to Toronto for a "controlled delivery," to see who would pick it up.

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Good. Cheer



► Margaret Sparks receives a turkey from Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank employee Corey Williams as volunteer Jessie Peck helps out on Thursday. The food bank provides hampers to needy families every Christmas season.

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO

Extending a hand for the holidays

Amherst man charged in pepper-spray attack

► Boy, 13, assaulted Monday ► Two other teens charged

An 18-year-old Amherst man will remain in jail over Christmas after being charged with several offences after an alleged pepper-spraying incident on a trail in the town.

Jordan Kenneth Burke made a brief appearance in Amherst provincial court on Thursday. He is charged with assault with a weapon, possession of a weapon,

Pleas entered

► The other two accused males, 15 and 16, entered pleas of not guilty in court on Wednesday.

wearing a mask while committing an offence and obstructing justice.

Burke and two teens

were charged after a 13-year-old boy was verbally assaulted and attacked with pepper spray while walking on a path in a field on Monday. The boy was later treated and released from the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre.

Police say there was no known relationship between the boy and his attackers. **AMHERST DAILY**



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► Members of the Lethbridge Bulls baseball team carry the casket of teammate Mitch MacLean at his funeral at Winsloe United Church in Winsloe, P.E.I., on Thursday.

Murdered ballplayer mourned

► P.E.I. funeral draws about 600

The mother of a young man who was gunned down at the side of a highway in Alberta read a poem to her son at his funeral Thursday that included lines recalling home-run glory.

Dianne MacLean spoke to hundreds of people at the funeral — many of them ballplayers wearing team caps and holding baseballs — as Mitch's father Irwin, also a baseball player and a coach, gently held her.

Her poem titled Last Time at the Plate described Mitch's battle with a pitcher that ends with him stroking a fast ball into the bleachers and rounding the bases into the arms of his teammates.

MacLean's verse made mourners smile as she took a playful dig at an umpire. It ended with a heartrending farewell to her son.

"The game is now over. You must pack up your gear. We know you'll keep playing. It's just not going to be here," MacLean said.

"Love you, Mitchie," she said as many in the congregation — including dozens

"Words cannot adequately express the debt of thanks we owe to so many who have surrounded us with love and supported and comforted us in countless ways this week."

MACLEAN FAMILY STATEMENT
IN FUNERAL PROGRAM

of former teammates from Alberta and Prince Edward Island — wept openly.

The funeral for MacLean, who was 20, was held in a United Church on the outskirts of Charlottetown.

He was one of four young people shot last week by Derek Jensen, just north of the town of Claresholm, before Jensen killed himself.

Police said the shootings were motivated by Jensen's breakup with a woman in the vehicle, Tabitha Steppe, who was remembered at a funeral service on Wednesday in Lethbridge, Alta. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Furnace blamed for church fire

Police say a problem with a furnace caused a fire that destroyed a church in Cape Breton last weekend.

The East Lake Ainslie Presbyterian Church was more than 125 years old.

For now ...

► Parishioners will hold services in a nearby church hall for the time being.

RCMP Const. Brad Anderson says there were problems with the building's furnace in the past.

No one was injured in the blaze.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Blaze leaves pair homeless

A Lunenburg County couple are homeless after fire ripped through their home early Thursday morning.

The Canadian Red Cross says the house at 301 Clearwater Dr. was completely

destroyed in the 3:30 a.m. blaze and the man and woman living inside lost all of their belongings. No one was injured.

A Canadian Red Cross team from Bridgewater helped the couple in buying clothing and food.

They are now staying with relatives.

A cause of the fire isn't known.

● **METRO**

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Layton is Canada's Newsmaker of the Year

► Late NDP leader won overwhelming majority of votes in two surveys — one by editors and news directors and another by the public online

John Gilbert Layton wore dozens of different name tags in his decades of public service: activist, guitarist, father and, finally, leader of the official Opposition.

Most knew the NDP leader by another name: Jack.

No other Canadian dominated the headlines like Layton in 2011, making him the clear choice for Newsmaker of the Year by editors and news directors participating in the annual survey of newsrooms across the country by The Canadian Press.

Layton received 90 per cent of the votes — one of the most overwhelming margins in the 65-year history of the CP Newsmaker voting. The next closest was Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who received just five per cent of the vote totals.

Also earning votes were Canada's new female premiers, the protesters at the heart of the Occupy Canada movement, former auditor general Sheila Fraser and the Grande Prairie Composite Warriors football team.

"Jack Layton single-handedly shaped Canada's political narrative in 2011, from the decimation of the Bloc Quebecois, to the marginalization of the Liberal party, to the utter vacuum



► No other Canadian dominated the headlines like Jack Layton in 2011.

left on Parliament Hill by his death," said Brodie Fennell, senior news editor, The Huffington Post Canada.

"We watched the drama of this scrappy underdog, cane in hand, pulling off an astonishing victory only to be felled months later before he could truly make something of it."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cherry a distant second

► Layton claimed half of the online votes cast, with hockey commentator Don Cherry a distant second at 16 per cent. Prime Minister Stephen Harper garnered 10 per cent of the vote, narrowly edging the Occupy Canada protesters at 9.5 per cent.

► Stratford, Ont., pop sensation Justin Bieber, who made tabloid headlines earlier this year when a fan named him in a paternity suit that she later dropped, rounded out the top five with 3.4 per cent of the vote.

Chretien gets \$200,000 compensation

The Federal Court has ordered Ottawa to pay \$200,000 to former Liberal prime minister Jean Chretien.

The money is compensation for legal fees Chretien incurred while he fought the findings of a federal inquiry into the sponsorship scandal.

The Federal Court agreed with Chretien in 2008 that Justice John Gomery had made inappropriate comments to the media about the former PM that compromised the process.

The federal government unsuccessfully appealed

that decision, and Chretien was awarded \$25,000 early this year for having to fight that round in the Federal Court of Appeal.

Chretien had said he spent \$300,000 for the initial Federal Court review of the conclusions written by Gomery in his 2005 report on the scandal.

The attorney general of Canada argued Chretien should only get \$36,205.20, but Judge Francois Lemieux used his discretion to award an amount above the usual guidelines for compensation.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Excuses that folks make ...

"I'm driving my drunk friends home. I've had less than all of them." That's one of the top excuses police have heard from impaired drivers this month.

The Insurance Corporation of B.C. put together the list to caution people on the best way to ensure a safe trip home from a holiday party.

"I can't be drunk ...

I'm the designated driver!" won't cut it, and neither will the other excuses police have heard: "I've only had a couple," "I can hold my liquor" and "I was only going two blocks."

ICBC says even a small amount of alcohol can cause impairment, and no matter how close a person is to home, they should think twice about drinking and driving.

The company says CounterAttack roadblocks will be up across the province during the holidays and no excuse will work if a person is driving while impaired.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wayward puffin returns home

A young Atlantic puffin rescued last week from Montreal's bustling downtown has arrived in its suspected home on the East Coast.

The wayward puffin, believed to be less than a year old, touched down at the airport in St. John's aboard a flight compliments of Air Canada.

A veterinary technician spotted the disoriented puffin toddling down a Montreal street a week ago. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Journal retracts fatigue report

The journal Science is retracting a controversial 2009 report that linked chronic fatigue syndrome to a virus.

Science is taking that step on its own. Normally, authors retract their own research papers when serious problems arise after publication.

But Science has lost confidence in the report and the validity of its conclusions, editor-in-chief Bruce Alberts writes in Friday's issue. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



► Siku's mother failed to produce enough milk to feed him.

Zoo raises polar bear by hand

A Danish zoo says a month-old polar bear cub is being raised by humans after his mother failed to produce enough milk to feed him.

Scandinavian Wildlife Park manager Frank Vigh-Larsen says Siku is doing "really fine."

Vigh-Larsen said Thursday that the cub was two days old when he was removed from his mother after surveillance video inside

7

The cub now weighs 7 pounds. He was 3 pounds at birth

the bear cave revealed that he "was moaning and being unruly all the time."

Vigh-Larsen says Siku would have been in danger of death if he had stayed with his mother.

Three people are giving round-the-clock care to the cub at the zoo in Kolind, 170 kilometres northwest of Copenhagen.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

File it under bad gift ideas

- Company apologizes for labelling Mein Kampf as a 'perfect present'
- Found in store's politics section

A British bookstore chain has apologized after promoting Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* as the "perfect present" for Christmas.

Waterstone's issued an apology after several people spotted the anti-Semitic tome at a store in Huddersfield in West Yorkshire with a sales sticker saying the book is "the perfect present" and "essential gift for anyone

seeking to understand one of history's most despicable figures. A shocking read and vital warning for future generations."

The online version of the U.K.'s Jewish Chronicle newspaper reports seeing copies of the book displayed in Manchester, Cheshire and Liverpool.

A Waterstone's spokesperson told the Chronicle that the large

bookstore chain doesn't actively promote the book and its customers "are capable of forming their own opinions on whether to purchase it or not."

"You do raise a couple of instances where we have obviously got things wrong. The book should not be stocked in any politics section," the spokesperson said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



► A copy of Mein Kampf

Odd news. Kids



► Twins Danielle, right and Nicole Fisher, 23, delivered baby boys 13 minutes apart at Virtua Hospital Tuesday.

JOHN ZIOMEK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Double trouble

Danielle and Nicole Fisher were in adjacent rooms in the same New Jersey hospital when they had their boys within 13 minutes of each other. Their due dates were a month apart. The women were born within 12 minutes of each other 23 years ago.

Toy jewels recalled by Health Canada

Health Canada is recalling more children's jewelry products after a sampling program turned up excessive lead in the products.

One recall involves metallic heart-shaped pendants and plastic bracelets imported from China and sold by Toy Land Co. of Vancouver.

The other involves a Writer's Block necklace with love, peace and globe charms made by Jude M Designs of India and sold in Canada by Liquidation World Inc. of Brantford, Ont. Consumers should immediately take any recalled jewelry products away from children and dispose of them after contacting their municipality for instructions on disposing items containing lead.

For more information, consumers may contact Toy Land Company toll-free 1-800-668-6388.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NOTICE

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR'S Collection & Processing Services Garbage/Organics/Recyclables

Residents of HRM are advised that municipal collection services (garbage, organics, recyclables) over the holidays – including December 23, December 26 (Boxing Day), December 30 and January 2 **will occur as regularly scheduled**. Collection services can begin as early as 7:00 am, therefore residents may place materials curbside the evening prior to collection day.

Your 2012 Organics Green Cart & Garbage and Recycling Collection Schedules are included inside the **Citizen's Guide to Municipal Services**, which will be delivered to your mailbox in December.

Otter Lake Facility Closed

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25
New Year's Day, Sunday, January 1



Otter Lake Facility Open

December 23 & 26 – 7:00 am to 7:00 pm
December 24 & 31 – 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
December 30 & January 2 – 7:00 am to 7:00 pm

HRM Recycling Plant Closed

December 24 & December 25
December 31 & January 1



HRM Recycling Plant Open

December 23 & December 26 – 7:30 am to 6:00 pm
December 30 & January 2 – 7:30 am to 6:00 pm

Household Hazardous Waste Depot Closed

December 24 & 31



Household Hazardous Waste Depot Open

Saturday, January 7 – 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

What Goes Where during the Holidays?

- Garbage – broken decorations, wreaths with wire frames or plastic cord, non-paper/foil gift wrap
- Paper Recycling (grocery or clear bags) – Paper gift wrap (no ribbons or bows)
- Corrugated Cardboard – bundle for recycling
- Green Cart – Boxboard (shoe and cereal type boxes)
- Compost or mulch greenery such as boughs.

Natural Christmas trees are collected curbside on any Green Cart collection day. No plastic tree bags, and make sure to remove all decorations, tinsel, hooks and stands.

For Holiday Precycle Tips for reuse and donating old toys or clothing to charity, visit our website at www.halifax.ca/recycle or call 490-4000.

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Where?

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'Geezer Bandit' faking old age: FBI

The FBI says an elderly-looking bank robber dubbed the Geezer Bandit may not be as old as he appears.

FBI spokeswoman Laura Eimiller says the robber believed to be responsible for 16 holdups in California may be wearing an elaborate costume. Witnesses have repeatedly told investigators that the robber appears to be wearing a mask and gloves.

Investigators also point to a surveillance video of a robbery earlier this month in which a security dye-pack exploded as the robber was making his getaway.

Eimiller says the speed with which the so-called "geezer," slang for a grumpy old man, was able to run away does not match his appearance of 60 to 70 years old.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Spanish lotto win gives tiny town needed boost

► One cash-strapped town has won the world's biggest lottery, raking in a combined \$940M US ► The top prize was split between 1,800 ticket holders

ALVARO BARRIENTOS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



► People celebrate winning a share in the top prize of Spain's Christmas lottery, known as El Gordo, in the town of Granen, around 300 kilometres from Madrid.

A tiny town of 2,000 in cash-strapped Spain found itself richer by \$940 million US on Thursday after scooping the top prize in the country's famed Christmas lottery.

Billed as the world's richest, the lottery dishes out some \$3.29 billion to winners across the country.

The top prize — dubbed El Gordo (The Fat One) — was split among the holders of tickets bearing the number 58268. The number appeared on 1,800 tickets, giving winners \$522,000 for their \$26 ticket.

The state lottery agency

said all 1,800 tickets with that number were sold in the town of Granen, located in the arid and barren northeastern Los Monegros area.

The news brought the town's residents out onto the street to dance, sing, hug each other and spray sparkling wine all over.

"It's brilliant!" Pilar Azagra, who runs the town's lottery store, told Spanish National Television. She appeared a bit stunned.

"I haven't had time to react — the number came out and then people started flocking to the shop," she said, adding that many in her family had bought

tickets.

Azagra said the windfall was more than welcome as several companies in Granen had closed because of the economic crisis, forcing many residents to seek employment in neighbouring towns and cities.

Spain is struggling to emerge from a near-two-year recession that has left it with a eurozone-high 21.5 per cent unemployment rate.

Other lotteries have larger individual top prizes but El Gordo is ranked as the world's richest for the total sum paid out.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lotto facts

- The Christmas lottery aims for a share-the-wealth system, rather than a single jackpot, and thousands of numbers yield at least some kind of return.
- Since it began in 1812, the Dec. 22 lottery has become a favourite holiday tradition.
- Spain holds another big lottery Jan. 6 to mark the Feast of the Epiphany. It is known as El Nino (The Child), in reference to the baby Jesus.

Stolen Christmas kettle unites locals for charity

A stolen Salvation Army Christmas kettle has opened up the wallets and hearts of Regina residents.

The thief made off with red kettle, filled with about \$800, from the city's Northgate Mall.

When the story got out, listeners of radio station CKRM responded, donating thousands of dollars.

Major Doug Binner with the Salvation Army says the group is grateful and

appreciates the outpouring of donations to help reach its goal of \$150,000.

He says just this morning alone, \$4,000 in cash has been donated, while there is another \$6,000 in donations committed, plus the local Walmart says it will match donations up to \$100,000.

Binner says it's amazing how something bad can turn into something positive. THE CANADIAN PRESS

TARA WALTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE



► The story of a thief making off with a Christmas kettle and about \$800 from a Regina mall has spurred an outpouring of donations for the Salvation Army.

101.3 THE BOUNCE
the **9 spot**

Top 5: December 22nd

- 5 Marianas Trench Fallout
- 4 Rihanna You Da One
- 3 Danny Fernandes Ft Belly Hit Me Up
- 2 Katy Perry The One That Got Away
- 1 LMFAO Sexy and I Know It

Weeknights at 9
Tessa counts down the **HOTTEST 5** songs that day!

1013THEBOUNCE.COM

Wish comes true for girl who met Kate

► Dad says 6-year-old's cancer has gone into remission

The shy, bald little girl who charmed Prince William and Kate when they visited Calgary in the summer has received her Christmas wish.

Diamond Marshall's father says she had surgery this week and the biopsies have shown her cancer is in remission, though she still must undergo chemotherapy and a bone-marrow transplant next month.

Diamond's brief meeting with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on a windy July day brought many Canadians to tears.

The six year old, who is battling Stage 4 undifferentiated sarcoma, had asked the Children's Wish Foundation for a chance to meet "a real princess."

She not only got to meet Kate, she managed to get in a hug with her idol and present her with flowers.

Diamond will spend Christmas in hospital re-



► The Duchess of Cambridge hugs six-year-old Diamond Marshall as the Royal Couple arrives in Calgary on July 7.

"This is a wonderful piece of news, especially at this time of year and we will be thinking of Diamond in the coming year."

STATEMENT FROM WILL AND KATE

covering from the surgery, but her dad says they're all OK with that as long as they're together. If all

goes well, Diamond will be home for New Year's Eve.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CANCER AWARENESS

Trouble over 'boobie' bracelet

Controversy is stirring at a Catholic school in

Woodstock, Ont., over bracelets supporting breast-cancer awareness.

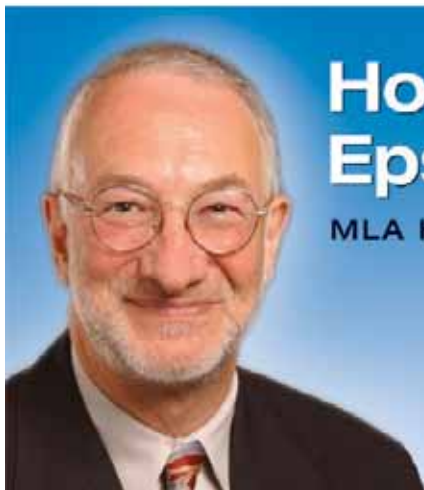
The bracelets read "I Love Boobies" and a 13-year-old student at St. Rita's Catholic School has been put on in-school suspension over them.

Kelly Millson has been urged by his parents to continue wearing them at school, but he says he

is not allowed to be in class, in the hallways or anywhere other students are congregating.

But he did decide to take the bracelets off this week so he could go out for recess. School board superintendent Tamara Nugent says the decisions on dress code are made by each school's principal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Bombers strike Baghdad

► Tensions rise in Iraq as attacks, mere days after U.S. forces leave, threaten stability in war-torn country ► Blasts hit 11 neighbourhoods, kill dozens

A wave of 16 bombings ripped across Baghdad Thursday, killing at least 69 people in the worst violence in Iraq for months. The apparently co-ordinated attacks struck days after the last American forces left the country and in the midst of a major government crisis between Shiite and Sunni politicians that has sent sectarian tensions soaring.

The bombings may be linked more to the U.S. withdrawal than the political crisis, but all together, the developments heighten fears of a new round of Shiite-Sunni sectarian bloodshed like the one a few years back that pushed Iraq to the brink of civil war.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. But the bombings bore all



► Iraqi security forces and people gather at the scene of a car bomb attack in Baghdad on Thursday.

the hallmarks of al-Qaida's Sunni insurgents. Most appeared to hit Shiite neighbourhoods, although some Sunni areas

were also targeted.

In all, 11 neighbourhoods were hit by either car bombs, roadside blasts or sticky bombs attached

Deadly attack

- The deadliest attack was in the Karrada neighbourhood, where a suicide bomber blew himself up outside the office of a government agency.
- At least 14 blasts went off in the morning and two more in the evening.
- Two police officers at the scene said the bomber was driving an ambulance and told guards that he needed to get to a nearby hospital. After the guards let him through, he drove to the building where he blew himself up, the officers said.

to cars. There was at least one suicide bombing and the blasts went off over several hours.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

France's genocide bill upsets Turkey

French lawmakers easily passed a measure Thursday to make it a crime to deny the mass killings of Armenians in 1915 by Ottoman Turks amounted to genocide. Turkey swiftly retaliated, ordering its ambassador home and halting official contacts, including some military co-operation.

Within hours of the vote on the bill, which would penalize those who deny the genocide, Turkey suspended joint military

Friend or foe?

► Turkey, a NATO member, is a strategic ally of France and a valued trading partner, and the moves diminish ties at a particularly crucial time. Paris and Ankara are both deeply involved in international issues from the uprising in Syria to Afghanistan.

manoeuvres and restricting French military flights. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Israel drops Gaza flotilla charges

Israel's attorney general has decided not to prosecute Israelis who participated in a Gaza-bound flotilla that was raided a

year ago.

The suspects included an Israeli-Arab lawmaker and an Islamist leader.

Nine pro-Palestinian Turkish activists were killed when Israeli naval commandos stormed the Gaza-bound ships. The raid prompted an international outcry. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Canada's top 10 weather stories

► Devastating floods and fires lead Environment Canada's list of biggest weather events of 2011

Fires and floods of almost biblical proportions that forced thousands from their homes and cut a swath of destruction through several communities took a heavy toll on Canadians this year, says one of the country's lead climatologists.

While those disasters weren't as deadly as the Japanese tsunami or the violent weather that battered the U.S., they wore down Canadians and cost the country billions, said David Phillips, senior climatologist with Environment Canada, who released his list of the top 10 weather stories of 2011 Thursday.

"We were getting our own fair share of misery,

Weather's top 10

- 1 Historic floods in Saskatchewan and Manitoba
- 2 Wildfires at Slave Lake
- 3 Richelieu River floods
- 4 Challenging growing season for farmers
- 5 Tornado in Goderich
- 6 Hurricanes in Atlantic region
- 7 Summer a mixed bag of weather
- 8 Arctic sea ice near record low
- 9 Groundhog Day blizzard
- 10 High winds rip through southern Alberta

hardship and misfortune from the weather," he said.

"There have been tough years but I think this one, in

many ways, has been difficult from an expensive point of view and the extreme aspect of it." **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Brazil. Fire

► A firefighter rescues a dog from a fire in the shantytown Favela do Moinho in Sao Paulo.



ANDRE PENNER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shantytown blaze

The fire started on Thursday in a vacant building and spread to the shantytown where about 200 homes were destroyed and one person was found dead, according to local media reports.

Stranded woman ate candy bars

A U.S. university student said she had nothing to eat but two candy bars while her car was stuck in the snow for nine days in a remote area of Arizona.

Lauren Weinberg, 23, was seen leaving her mother's home Dec. 11.

Coconino County sheriff's spokesman Gerry Blair said she was driving around with no destination when she came to a dirt road near cliffs that divide the state's high country from the desert. Her car became stuck after she stopped to try to open a gate.

Weinberg told a sheriff's deputy she put snow in a water bottle and placed it on the car so it would melt, Blair said.

She had a cellphone but the battery was dead.

Two U.S. Forest Service employees found her nine days later. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**



Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank -and- Skills Development Centre

Year End Report October 2010 - September 2011

With the support of our donors we have been able to provide the following assistance to those in need during the past year.

Food Bank

Number of people assisted with food	29,012
Estimated value of food given out	\$2,574,513

Furniture Bank

Furniture items	4,200
-----------------	-------

Skills Development

Number of successful students	22
-------------------------------	----

School Supplies

Students assisted with backpacks & supplies	518
---	-----

Emergency Fund

Amount of crisis funding provided	\$47,000
Christmas Hampers Provided	1,013

Families were also supplied with thousands of household items such as cookware, dishes, cutlery, linens, etc. We thank our many donors for their assistance. We wish all our supporters and families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Please help us to continue our mission of decreasing poverty through our Food and Furniture Bank, the Operations of our Skills Development Centre whereby unemployed individuals are provided training to become productive members of society, and through our Emergency Fund which provides crisis funding to those in need.

Your donation will be gratefully received and may be sent to:
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Consumers reluctant to purchase big-ticket items

► Consumer Confidence index at lowest point since last recession ► Spending likely to decline further

The Conference Board of Canada's latest consumer confidence numbers are back to where they were around the height of the 2008-2009 recession, a troubling sign of what's to come for the economy in 2012.

The Ottawa think-tank said Thursday its Index of Consumer Confidence posted a 6.5-point drop in December, bringing 2011 to a "disappointing" close and signalling that further belt-tightening by Canadians.

"We've always seen a link between the consumer confidence level today and consumer spending six months down the road," said board economist Todd Crawford in an interview.

Canadians tend to think their economy is based mainly on exports — and

those do play a big role — but a decline in consumer spending is not to be taken lightly, Crawford said.

"I think that's why most people, and certainly us, are expecting (gross domestic product) growth in Canada to slow over the next two to three quarters."

The board uses a 2002 base of 100 in compiling the index, which reflects how Canadians feel about the economy, job creation, future major purchases and their personal finances.

The board said opinion eroded on all four questions, but responses to the major purchases question were particularly gloomy.

In December, just 34.1 per cent of respondents said now is a good time to buy a big-ticket item, while

Market moment

TSX



+ 122.95
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Dollar



+ 0.45¢
(97.93¢ US)

OIL



+ 86¢ US
(\$99.53 US)

Natural gas

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(+ 1.00¢ US)

Gold

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(- \$3.00 US)

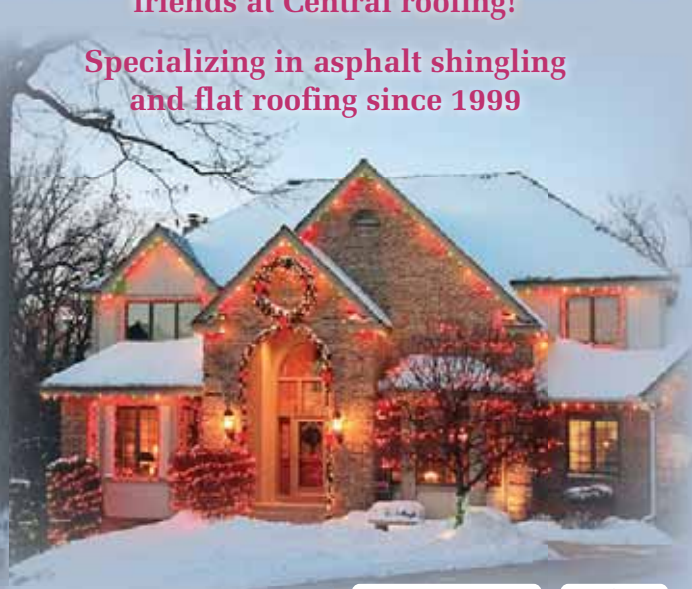
that 54 per cent said now is a bad time to make a major purchase, up 3.5 percentage points from last month.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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▶ A man tries to catch a ride to Namur, Belgium, while trade union members block a main boulevard in Brussels on Thursday.

Strikes hinder holiday travel

▶ Protest against pension reform hit rail, road, bus traffic in Belgium

Holiday strikes to protest austerity measures paralyzed ground traffic in Belgium, delayed flights in Paris, and promised days of headaches for Christmas travellers around Europe.

Workers were walking off the job to show their ire at budget-slashing measures by their governments to tackle debt and high deficits, and officials were scrambling Thursday to try

to mitigate delays and cancellations. Eurostar and Thalys idled part of their service through Brussels. In France, a strike by airport security personnel stretched into its seventh

day, and in London, football club Arsenal postponed its day-after-Christmas game by 24 hours because of a planned public transport strike on the Boxing Day holiday. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

TSX regulator set to quicken enforcement

Canada's largest stock market watchdog is moving ahead with plans to speed up enforcement and says it will be business as usual with other provinces after the Supreme Court scrapped a planned national securities regulator.

Ontario Securities Commission chairman Howard Wetston said Thursday the regulator is focused on the best interests of its own investors and companies, though it will review a Supreme Court ruling that quashed the federal plan.

The regulator of Canada's dominant stock exchange — the TSX — has been developing new rules aimed at speeding up enforcement for securities law

cases such as insider trading that drag on for years. "We are currently dealing with important policy, enforcement, market infrastructure and other matters that will require our full commitment," Wetston said in a statement.

The Supreme Court turned down Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's plan as unconstitutional, which effectively puts an end to a years-long push for a unified body to oversee capital markets. The court acknowledged Ottawa has a role in addressing systemic risk to the financial system.

Canada is the only country in the G20 without a national securities regulator.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Saskatoon scoops up .xxx domains

The City of Saskatoon has purchased six Internet domain names ending in .xxx, including Saskatoon.xxx, which were created earlier this year for the adult entertainment industry.

Kevin Peacock with the city says it's all about protecting the brand and image of Saskatoon. He says they were concerned as a municipal government that it would be quite embarrassing if someone typed in Saskatoon and it called up a porn site.

The six domain names cost taxpayers nearly \$1,000 to hold for two years. Several other local companies and institutions have bought X-rated domain names as well.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

Immigration up in Germany

DEBT. Figures show that immigration to Germany from countries hit by the EU debt crisis have risen 29 per cent. A total of 381,000 foreigners have moved to Germany, including about 250,000 EU citizens.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Earnings rise across Canada

WAGES. Average weekly earnings of non-farm payroll employees increased 1.4 per cent to \$885.36 in October. Statistics Canada reports average weekly earnings were up 2.7 per cent from a year earlier. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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PIPPA AND PERILS OF 2011

THE METRO LIST

NEIL MORTON
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1 Royal wedding: Two billion people watched Will and Kate tie the knot — and Pippa Middleton's derriere become world famous.

2 Steve Jobs: The visionary Apple co-founder died at age 56, having led a dramatic cultural and technological transformation.

3 Lindsay Lohan: Lohan salvaged a terrible year with the law — and her career — by appearing on Playboy's bestselling cover (which also made Playboy relevant again).

4 Lady Gaga: She arrived at the Grammys being carried in a huge egg. Which is what you do when you're trying really hard to be cool.

5 Ashton Kutcher & Demi Moore: They break up — and in keeping with relationship etiquette in the Social Media Age, unfollow each other on Twitter.

6 Kim Kardashian: The woman famous for no reason has a marriage that only lasts 72 days for some reason. Oh yeah — it was her naked yoga instructor.

7 Weinergate: Congressman Anthony Weiner tweets a photo of his penis by mistake, resulting in countless "wiener" jokes, a scandal — and, naturally, his resignation.

8 Margaret Atwood: A public feud between Atwood and Toronto city councillor Doug Ford (Mayor Rob's older bro) leads to a cheeky "Atwood for Mayor" campaign.

9 Amy Winehouse: Joins the "27 club," a group of seminal musicians like Kurt Cobain, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison who died at age 27.

10 Martha Stewart: Martha Stewart tweets, "Do you think I am hip?" That's one of the tweets of the year.

11 Kate Gosselin: Her reality show is cancelled, and her kids now live in peace. As one blog noted, "(The kids) know not the craven greed machine they were plugged into."

12 Tim Tebow: The devout Christian NFL QB with an unorthodox throwing style who people keep saying will fail just keeps winning. And Tebowmania and "Tebowing" goes viral.

13 Charlie Sheen: After getting fired from Two and a Half Men, the troubled Sheen launches a bizarre Violent Torpedo Of Truth tour. Thankfully, he's off whatever Kool-Aid he was on.

14 @bronxzoocobra: A cobra escapes a zoo and someone creates a hilarious Twitter account that goes viral, tweeting its time on the run. (Other awesome Twitter accounts like @S-tGirlsSay also go viral this year.)

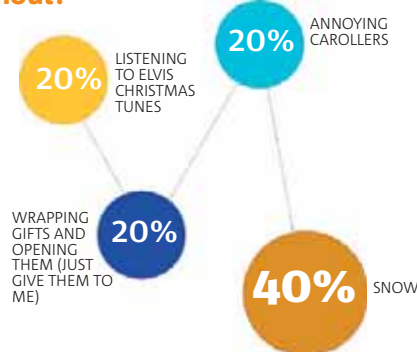
15 Piers Morgan: Morgan replaces the legendary Larry King on CNN but has the makings of a legend himself with his intelligent hardball-with-a-cheeky-grin Q & A style.

16 Kissing Couple: During the riots in Vancouver, post-NHL final, an image of a couple lying on a tear-gas-filled street having a tender kiss with riot police around gets circulated throughout the world — becoming one of 2011's iconic images.



Register at
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and take the quick poll

What holiday tradition could you do without?



Local tweets



@myweeview:
Dec. 25th is the only day I

want a touch of snow! Can't believe the warm weather! #Halifax

@droptheo: ... "Out of all the liquor I stole, it's the \$13 wine that got me arrested" #heardonthebus #Halifax

@AmeliaEmilyS: #Halifax today for some last minute shopping and trip planning.

@Thrieman: Kwortet this fraud sentence for Ms. George will be a good comparison when our

sticky fingered MLA's are sentenced.

@megwindsor: John Lennon's 'so this is christmas', come on radio play it. #Halifax

@survivorm: Just saw His Worship @mayorpeterkelly going to work. Judging from the weight of his briefcase it'll be a busy day! #halifax #nspoli

@katie tower: Still on the hunt for a rental parking spot somewhere near Prince & Barrington in #Halifax. Feeding the meter in the meantime!

@chloeemily_: One thing I don't miss about #halifax: creepy men on the bus

The karate keeper



Goalie and 'fan' clash on pitch

AMSTERDAM. Film buffs will say he took those moves straight out of 2001 martial-arts/sports movie mashup Shaolin Soccer. This striking image shows goalie Esteban Alvarado Brown, right, of AZ Alkmaar retaliate as he is attacked by a football hooligan during the Dutch cup match between Ajax and AZ Alkmaar.

● METRO WORLD NEWS

"He walked to (the hooligan) and kicked him multiple times."

BAS NIJHUIS, REFEREE, ON WHY HE SENT OFF ALVARADO



How the kung fu soccer unfolded

TIMELINE. The drunk Ajax "fan," 19, invaded the pitch and launched a flying kick towards the Costa Rican goalkeeper. Alvarado lashed out a series of his own kicks before security dragged the supporter away. After the goalie was given a red card for misconduct, Alkmaar's angry coach Gertjan Verbeek ordered his team to leave the pitch. ● METRO WORLD NEWS

Follow Neil Morton on Twitter (@neilmorton).



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Synopsis

Since first being published in December 1843 Charles Dickens's story of Ebenezer Scrooge's emotional transformation from hoarder to Ho Ho-er has been presented in many forms. A Christmas Carol has been adapted into opera, ballet, a Broadway musical and even a mime show starring Marcel Marceau. On film there have been at least 28 versions of the story and dozens more for television. This week the Reel Guys have a look at the best big screen versions of the classic story.



▶ A Christmas Carol remains a popular story to put to film — with at least 28 versions out there.

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE & MARK BRESLIN

SCENE@METRONews.CA



Bah, humbug!

- ▶ Sim, Murray and Carrey have all played the miser who finds redemption
- ▶ Crouse and Breslin debate the best movie version of A Christmas Carol

Richard: Mark, there is only one must-see out of all the dozens of film and TV versions of the Charles Dickens classic and that's the 1951 Alastair Sim version. Nearly perfect in every way, it is a tale of redemption that confirms the fundamental spiritual nature of Christmas itself. In other words, it makes us feel good. Accept no substitutes. If, however, you've already seen it this year or you're allergic to black and white movies, there are alternatives.

MB: Richard, you are so right. The movie HAS to be in black and white to

make us feel the spirit of Dickensian deprivation. It's the classic. But growing up in a Jewish household, it didn't have any importance to me as a child. I discovered it much later, and was transfixed by its narrative power and perfectly gloomy mood. May I contrast this with the Jim Carrey version? Now that's a movie with no sense of mystery, and a buffoonish interpretation of the lead character. I feel sorry for children who grow up with this bloated, CGI-laden excuse for a classic. Richard, please don't tell me you like it!

RC: Before I saw the Jim Carrey version of A Christmas Carol I wondered why remake a story that has been done so often and so well in the past. I've seen it and I'm still wondering. The weirdly lifeless animation was creepy, akin to a Christmas story performed by zombies.

MB: Let me praise Bill Murray's version Scrooged. It's far from authentic, light years away from Dickens, but it makes its points in a very modern way. Bill Murray is great in it, and the writing is sharp and satirical. Setting it in the milieu of the television industry

obviously changes the mood of the original, but as long as you see the movie as an interesting and successful riff upon the original story, and not as a substitute for it, it's a great movie for the season.

RC: I agree. It's become a must see for me every year. Although I don't have to see The Muppets Christmas Carol every year, it is a treat to see Michael Caine as Scrooge. I also like the musical Scrooge with Albert Finney in the lead.

MB: I've never seen it! I sure hope they gave Tiny Tim a tap solo.

Scene in brief



If you're experiencing a joy overload on Christmas Day, revel in some apocalyptic fare at the movie theatre. The Darkest Hour opens Dec. 25. The film follows five people in Moscow fighting an alien race who have attacked Earth via our power supply.

METRO



oo-who? Daniel Craig excels away from Bond, adds second franchise with Dragon Tattoo

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Top 5 actors to watch next year...

DOUGLAS BOOTH

Could the role of Romeo in the latest Romeo and Juliet turn Booth into another Leonardo DiCaprio? With a second starring role alongside Disney princess-turned-stoner Miley Cyrus in LOL..., well, look at the kid's hair. It's a little like Leo.



MICHAEL FASSBENDER

We're not going to hide our partiality to this Irish-German export, 34, who was ubiquitous in 2011 with an impressive four releases, including X-Men: First Class and Jane Eyre. His upcoming spy flick with director Steven Soderbergh, Haywire (Jan. 20), combined with all the awards-season buzz he's been getting for his performance in 2011's Shame will propel Fassbender to A-List by the time his sci-fi film Prometheus, a semi-sequel to Alien, is released in the summer (June 8).



CHRIS DIAMANTOPOULOS

We finally learned how to spell Galifianakis, so it's about time another comedic actor with an impossibly lengthy Greek last name take the scene by storm. Audiences first got to meet D-what's-his-face on the American sitcom Up All Night but the Greco-Canadian actor will get even more exposure this spring (April 13) with the release of The Three Stooges, in which he plays Moe, the only Stooge with a passable haircut.

TAYLOR KITSCH

The Friday Night Lights star appears in two huge movies this summer: the sci-fi epic John Carter, set on Mars, and Battleship, a sci-fi version of the popular board game. Finally, he'll be known for something more than his abs.



JOSH HUTCHERSON

This 19-year-old actor has been working steadily in Hollywood, but it'll be the March 23 release of the highly anticipated film adaptation of The Hunger Games that makes him a star. While we can't prom-

ise he'll be the next Robert Pattinson — sorry, RPatz will always have a special vampire lair in our hearts — the series' rabid fanbase will give Hutcherson a fast pass to megastardom. Especially because it's a romantic lead. (For younger kids, he's also in 2012's Journey 2: The Mysterious Island.)

-Peter Travers
Rolling Stone
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-Jeff Craig,
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Top 5 ladies to look out for

GINA CARANO

How does a mixed martial-artist end up as the lead in a Steven Soderbergh indie spy thriller? And with a supporting cast that includes acting heavyweights Ewan McGregor, Michael Fassbender and Michael Douglas? She kicks ass, obviously.



Did you know?

"It's so satisfying watching her beat the (expletive) out of the cast," Soderbergh told The

Playlist blog about Carano.

He caught her on TV one night and thought, Why has no one made a movie with her?

ELIZABETH OLSEN

The Olsen Twins' younger sister got a major headstart in 2011 with her impressive performance in indie cult film Martha Marcy May Marlene and this thoughtful, wide-eyed actress will continue the momentum with Liberal Arts, written and directed by How I Met Your Mother star Josh Radnor. She'll also appear in the horror flick Silent House (March 9) and paranormal thriller Red Lights alongside Robert De Niro and Cillian Murphy.



LILY COLLINS

The spawn of Sussudio impresario Phil Collins already had her coming out party in 2011 with roles in Abduction and Priest. This year the 22-year-old has a starring role in Tarsem Singh's lighthearted take on the Snow White fairytale in Mirror Mirror (March 16th) co-starring Julia Roberts, along with prominent roles in The English Teacher co-starring Julianne Moore and sci-fi film The Mortal Instrument.

ANDREA RISEBOROUGH

Thank the Material Girl herself, Madonna, for bringing this English Rose to the forefront in 2012. Riseborough will start off the year with her lauded performance in Madge-directed feature W.E. (Feb. 3) as controversial paramour to King Edward the 8th, Wallis Simpson. She'll stay at the forefront with IRA thriller Shadow Dancer, as well as Disconnect, co-starring True Blood babe Alexander Skarsgard and Jason Bateman — finishing it off with English crime thriller Welcome to the Punch.



TAYLOR SCHILLING

Oh, to star in a Nicholas Sparks book adaptation. Though she may've been the lead in failed TV show Mercy and dead-on-arrival Atlas Shrugged: Part One as lead character Dagny Taggart, somebody in Hollywood has some faith in this American 27-year-old. She's been cast opposite Zac Efron in The Lucky One (April 20), a romance about an Iraq war veteran who goes in search of the woman whose photo became his good luck charm while fighting in the war. Schilling will also star in Ben Affleck-directed political thriller Argo in 2012.



RICHARD ROEPER

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**We Bought a Zoo****Genre:** Comedy**Director:** Cameron Crowe**Stars:** Matt Damon, Scarlett Johansson, Thomas Haden Church

🌐🌐🌐 Cameron Crowe might not seem on surface the first choice for a family friendly comedy, but a closer look at his work — from *Almost Famous* to *Jerry Maguire* — proves otherwise. Crowe's pictures almost always deal with family situ-

ations, mostly unorthodox, but always gripped by truth and sentimentality. His adaptation of the best-selling book, *We Bought a Zoo*, is really just another Crowe joint: melancholy yet joyous, optimistic and truthful. Matt Damon is in fine form as the still-aching widow who moves his two children to a dilapidated country zoo and he's matched by Scarlett Johansen as a feisty zookeeper. 🟢CHRIS ALEXANDER

**War Horse****Genre:** Drama**Director:** Steven Spielberg**Stars:** Jeremy Irvine, Emily Watson

🌐🌐🌐 A book-turned-play-turned Steven Spielberg epic, *War Horse* is a manipulated but multilayered telling of the First World War through the eyes of a tempestuous thoroughbred. Combin-

ing several characters from both sides of the battle, Spielberg overextends his focus on sentimentality but as he's proved in *Saving Private Ryan*, nobody crafts cinematic combat scenes better and the auteur succeeds most notably with a stunningly filmed cavalry charge that outlines the harrowing carnage of war. 🟢STEVE GOW

**The Artist****Genre:** Drama**Director:** Michel Hazanavicius**Stars:** Jean Dujardin, Berenice Bejo, John Goodman

🌐🌐🌐 Black and white; silent; set in silent-era Hollywood; and subtitled, *The Artist* may not scream mainstream must see, but it's one of the year's most gloriously memorable films. This French jewel is magical, pure and dreamy on

the surface, blazing emotion and irrevocable change underneath. Dujardin is Valentin, the toast of Tinseltown, a matinee idol who charms the birds out of the fake trees that line Mulholland Drive. But he's about to lose it all if he can't make the cut to sound. *The Artist* feels like a fairy tale, something you're watching in a theatre and it is 1927.

🟢ANNE BRODIE

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WHAT TO BUY WITH THE CHRISTMAS MONEY

SOUND CHECK



ALAN CROSS
SCENE
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With two days to go, what do you get the music fan on your list?

Let's assume for a second that there will be some envelopes under the tree Christmas morning. You could do the responsible thing and apply whatever

cash you get to the post-Christmas debts — remember that CPP takes its annual chunk out of your paycheque as of January 1! — or use it for an RRSP contribution.

But let's be honest: you're going to do neither. Instead, you'll contribute

to the retail economy by recycling that cash on things that...well, things that you think you need but really don't. In fact, no one actually needs any of these things.

The Drum Machine T-Shirt (\$30)

You might have heard

about those t-shirts that allow you to strum rudimentary chords when you pass your hand across the front. This is just the next logical step in wearable instruments.

The iHorn (\$540)

Inspired by the acoustic principles used in old-school gramophone horns, these things may require rearranging the furniture, but if these things are even on your radar, chances are you've already got a place that's way too big already.

iNuke (\$30,000)

If the iHorn is too weenie for you, then you need to step up to this 700-pound, 10,000-watt iPhone/iPod speaker dock.

No, none of the numbers in the preceding is a typo.

A Street-Legal Race Car Inspired by a Bjork Video (\$125,000)

Lest you think that Bjork can't live down that swan dress, take a look at the BAC Mono, a single-seat street-legal track. This thing wouldn't exist had its designers not been inspired by the video for Bjork's All Is Full of Love.

And although all 50 copies for 2011 have been sold out, the manufacture can promise delivery for 2013. Perhaps you should

put that Christmas money aside after all.

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Just because he wears a ton of eyeliner...

► Shocker: Adam Lambert gets into a gay bar brawl in Helsinki

THE WORD

DOROTHY ROBINSON
SCENE@METRONWS.CA



Well, this is awesome: Former American Idol star Adam Lambert was arrested and briefly jailed in Finland after reportedly getting into a gay bar brawl with his boyfriend, Finnish Big Brother star Sauli Koskinen, according to the Hollywood Reporter.

Lambert is in Helsinki to spend Christmas with Koskinen's family, and the couple was out drinking with Finnish beauty queen

and ex-Miss Helsinki Sofia Ruusila when an argument between the two men turned violent, causing them to be kicked out of the bar.

Their fight continued in the street, where Lambert reportedly hit Ruusila by mistake, she told a Finnish entertainment channel. Lambert and Koskinen were arrested and questioned for several hours before being released Thursday afternoon.

Finnish beauty queens, gay bar fights, jail time — and here you thought you'd have an interesting Christmas break if your mother had two glasses of wine instead of her usual one.

Adam Lambert for the win!

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES



► Adam Lambert

No Xmas TV at Beyoncé's house

Beyoncé says she and Jay-Z are looking forward to enjoying the holidays free

from the glare of television.

"I will be with family. We are both so busy throughout the year that Christmas is just a time to relax with family and count the many blessings in your life," the pregnant pop star says, according to Contact Music.

"Christmas Day is a no-TV zone. We just like to sit and talk together as a fami-



► Jay-Z and Beyoncé

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ly."

She also admits that being expectant parents will likely have an effect on the gifts they buy each other: "We both keep seeing super-cute stuff for the baby, so I am sure even our presents for each other will involve the baby in some way," she says. ● METRO



► Ashton Kutcher

Kutcher moves on

Ashton Kutcher is apparently making the most of his newly single status, as the Two and a Half Men star was spotted hanging out with three young women in Berlin this week, where he's reportedly researching a new business venture, according to Hollyscoop.

Kutcher and the three women were spotted getting into his chauffeur-driven car together, though he was later seen heading into an apartment with just one of them, a brunette.

● METRO

Is Jamie Bell looking for a ring?

The rekindled romance must be working, because Jamie Bell and Evan Rachel Wood are reportedly thinking about marriage.

"They have been shopping for rings for at least a month," a source tells Us Weekly.



► Jamie Bell and Rachel Wood

And the two certainly aren't afraid of commitment, as they reportedly got matching tattoos during their initial courtship in 2006.

"Evan and Jamie were really young and just getting going in their careers when

they first met and they just weren't ready," another source tells Radar Online.

"Now that they are older and both excelling in their professional lives, I think they feel ready to take their relationship to the next level." ● METRO

Ryan, Blake hit Vancouver

Ryan Reynolds treated Blake Lively to some pre-holiday family time while the couple were in Vancouver this week, according to Us Weekly.

After shopping for toys and cupcakes earlier in the day, the pair joined Reynolds' mother and brother for dinner at Tojos restaurant.

Sources who spotted Lively and Reynolds around town say they were "really friendly" but kept to themselves. ● METRO

3 life

Tenderloin Tip



The cut of meat in this recipe is very important. When you head to the meat counter, be sure to specify that you want a centre-cut tenderloin. This will ensure that you don't get a roast that contains several pieces of tenderloin pressed together.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Some common sense can help keep food healthy and safe during the festive season

Perfect turkey supporters



PETER ROCKWELL
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As sure as the Grinch stole Christmas, it's a given that we'll all receive at least one bottle of wine as a gift from a co-worker, guest or neighbour over the holiday season.

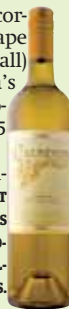
In my house, I pick the wines that go with Xmas dinner so — while much appreciated — anything that shows up at the door goes into the wine rack for future enjoyment.

Of course, considering how my family can plow through my wine selection, it would be nice if more of the freebies came with a roast turkey match in mind.

For reds, bring a plump New World pinot noir from California or Canada, a chocolaty old vines zinfandel (also from Cali.) or, for a slightly unconventional Old World partner, a Crianza or Reserva from Spain's Rioja region.

On the white side, think a not so oaky chardonnay from Australia or Chile, a German riesling or a rich, multi-blend like the ripe, refreshing cornucopia of grape flavours (five in all) that is California's Caymus 2009 Cordon Rouge (\$23.95 - \$29.99).

Happy holidays! **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS CANADA. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**



Happy healthy holidays

► This Beef Wellington contains just 11 grams of fat and 328 calories

MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Preparation:

1 Heat oven to 190 C (375 F). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Season beef liberally with salt and pepper.

2 In sauté pan over medium-high, heat olive oil. When oil just smoking, add beef. Brown on all sides, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Once browned, remove beef and place on a rack to rest.

3 Add garlic to hot pan and cook until lightly browned, 20 seconds. Add mushrooms and onion and cook until soft and tender and all liquid has evaporated, 10 mins. Season with salt and pepper and add 10 ml (2 tsp) of the thyme.

4 Set aside 50 ml (1/4 cup) of mushroom-onion mix. Transfer rest to food processor and pulse to roughly chop until reduced to 5-mm (1/4-inch) pieces. Transfer to bowl and refrigerate 5 mins. Once slightly cooled, add spinach and egg whites and mix well.

5 In bowl, stir pancake mix with just enough water, about 75 ml (1/3 cup), to moisten and make dough that holds together but is not sticky. On lightly floured surface, roll dough to a thin rectangle that is 5 cm (2 inches) longer than the beef roast. Place beef on dough. Spoon spinach and mushroom mix on



► This recipe serves eight.

top and sides of beef and pat down tightly. Fold dough up and over top of beef and spinach and crimp seams together.

6 Place meat, seam side down, on baking sheet. Cut slits in top to vent. Bake 40 mins. or until centre registers 60 C (140 F). Remove from oven, cover with foil and let rest for 10 minutes.

7 Meanwhile, place 2 of porcini chunks in a spice grinder and grind to fine powder. Place mushroom powder, remaining

whole porcini mushroom chunks and shredded jerky in a microwave-safe bowl with 500 ml (2 cups) of water. Microwave high until water is simmering. Let sit for 5 minutes and repeat.

8 Pour Madeira into small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to boil and boil 5 mins. or until reduced by half. Pour dried mushroom and beef broth through fine mesh strainer into Madeira while pushing on jerky and mushrooms to extract as much liquid

Ingredients:

- 900 g (32 oz) beef tenderloin, centre cut, trimmed of all visible fat
- Salt and black pepper
- 7 ml (1/2 tbsp) olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 285 g (10 oz) button mushrooms, sliced
- 250 ml (1 cup) diced onion
- 12 ml (1 1/2 tsp) thyme
- 1 pkg (284 g/10 oz) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- 2 egg whites, beaten
- 400 ml (1 2/3 cups) Bisquick Heart Smart Pancake and Baking Mix
- 5 chunks dried porcini mushrooms
- 22 ml (3/4 oz) beef jerky, finely shredded
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) Madeira
- 22 ml (1 1/2 tbsp) arrowroot powder
- 10 ml (2 tsp) soy sauce

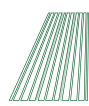
as possible. Remove whole pieces of porcini mushrooms and roughly chop; set aside. Discard jerky. Bring broth and Madeira mix to a boil.

9 In bowl, combine arrowroot and 60 ml (4 tbsp) cold water. Mix and add to simmering sauce. Cook and stir 1 min or until sauce thickens. Add soy sauce, remaining thyme, reserved porcini and reserved mushroom and onion mix. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Slice roast into 8 even slices and arrange on a platter. Serve with sauce. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ROCCO DISPIRITO**

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Walking in a sweet treat wonderland

Looking for a new holiday gift idea? Make this Almond Bark to share with family and friends Give Candy Canes new meaning in tasty tarts



NEWS CANADA

refrigerate until set.

4 In bowl, set over saucepan of hot water, melt bittersweet and semi-sweet chocolates until smooth.

5 Pour chocolate over cooled almond toffee and spread evenly with an offset spatula. Sprinkle top with remaining almonds. If desired, drizzle top with melted milk chocolate or white chocolate for contrast. Chill uncovered for about 1 hour or until set.

6 Break toffee into pieces. Keep layered between sheets of parchment paper in an airtight container at cool room temperature or refrigerated for 1 week.

NEWS CANADA/ALMOND BOARD OF CALIFORNIA/ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS/PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND A TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE, VISIT EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA)

Preparation:

1 Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C) and grease a large baking sheet. Set aside. In a separate large baking pan, spread almonds and toast for 8 minutes or until slightly brown. Let cool.

2 In heavy saucepan bring butter, sugar, water,

vanilla, and salt to a boil over medium heat, stirring with a wooden spoon. Boil mixture, without stirring, 12 mins. or until deep golden.

3 Remove pan from heat and stir in 2 cups (500 mL) of toasted almonds. Immediately pour onto greased baking sheet. Spread evenly and then

Ingredients:

- 4 cups (1 L) sliced almonds
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup (60 mL) water
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) vanilla
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt
- 1 lb (454 g) high-quality bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 8 oz (227 g) high-quality semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
- 3 oz. (90 g) milk or white chocolate, melted (optional)

Candy Cane Tarts



Preparation:

1 Prepare tart shells according to directions for unfilled tart shells. Set aside. Whip topping according to directions; set aside.

2 In bowl, combine instant chocolate pudding and milk. Beat using an electric mixer until thickened, 2 to 4 minutes.

3 Place half of prepared pudding in separate

bowl and fold in 2/3 of the whipped topping. Divide plain pudding mix evenly among cooled tart shells. Top with pudding-whipped topping mixture.

4 Refrigerate filled tarts and remaining whipped topping at least 2 hours. Serve with dollop of remaining whipped topping; sprinkle with crushed candy canes. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/TENDERFLAKE**

Ingredients:

- 12 frozen tart shells
- 75 ml (1/3 cup) whipped topping
- 1 pkg (250 g/8 oz) instant chocolate pudding
- 250 ml (1 cup) milk
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) crushed candy canes or mint candy

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COLE HARBOUR NATIVE ALEXIS CROSSLEY WILL SUIT UP FOR CANADA AT THE IIHF WORLD WOMEN'S UNDER-18 HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP STARTING DEC. 31 IN PREROV AND ZLIN, CZECH REPUBLIC. THE 17-YEAR-OLD BLUE-LINER PLAYS FOR SHATTUCK-ST. MARY'S PREP SCHOOL IN FARIBAULT, MINN.

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► Nathan MacKinnon, shown here with Team Nova Scotia at the Canada Games in February, is expected to be named captain of Team Atlantic for the world under-17 challenge.

Something to prove

► Moose MacKinnon top candidate to be named captain of Team Atlantic



MATTHEW WUEST
@METRONEWS.CA

Say what you want about Hockey Canada's controversial decision not to invite Nathan MacKinnon to its world junior selection camp — the Atlantic under-17 team's medal hopes got a big boost from it.

With the world under-17 challenge set to begin on Dec. 29 in Windsor, Ont., the 16-year-old superstar from Cole Harbour will be the driving force behind Team Atlantic's bid for its first medal since 2005.

"I hope he brings back a little bit of attitude to show everybody he is the best in the world in his age group and that he should have earned a spot (at the world junior camp)," said Atlantic head coach Eric Bissonnette. "I think that's what Hockey Canada wants to see from him. Not only dominating, but how good of a leader he is and how good he can make our team."

MacKinnon, who leads the Halifax Mooseheads in scoring as a rookie, already helped Team Atlantic to a fifth-place finish — its best

since 2005 — as an under-ager last year in Portage La Prairie, Alta., tying for seventh among all scorers with eight points in five games.

But as important as he will be, it's the supporting cast — featuring the likes of another Mooseheads forward, Ryan Falkenham of Halifax, and eight other Nova Scotians — that could be the key to success.

"We know what Nathan will give us. We expect he'll be our best guy, so we need the other guys to do their jobs," Bissonnette said. "A guy like Ryan, if he gives us a real good showing, re-

sponsible defensively, a big shut-down guy, and adding to the scoresheet, that's what we're looking for."

Nova Scotia opens on Dec. 29 against Quebec and is in a round-robin pool with defending gold medalist Ontario as well as Germany and Sweden. The top two teams in the pool qualify for the semifinals.

"One bad outing can take you out of medal contention," Bissonnette said. "But if our goaltending is strong, we believe we have a good chance to compete for a medal on the last day of the tournament."

QMJHL

STANDINGS

	W	L	T	P
*QUEBEC	(3)28	6	3	59
*SAINT JOHN	(4)28	10	1	57
*B.-BOISBRIAND	20	14	2	42
SHAWINIGAN	(5)25	9	4	54
HALIFAX	22	11	3	47
VICTORIAVILLE	21	13	2	44
RIMOUSKI	22	17	0	44
CHICOUTIMI	17	11	8	42
BAIE-COMEAU	19	15	2	40
BATHURST	18	18	4	40
GATINEAU	16	16	5	37
MONCTON	17	18	2	36
VAL-D'OR	15	19	4	34
DRUMMONDVILLE	14	18	5	33
CAPE BRETON	15	21	1	31
R.-NORANDA	12	25	2	26
P.E.I.	8	24	4	20

*—DIVISION LEAD; (#)—NATIONAL RANK

UPCOMING GAMES

- Tuesday, Dec. 27
P.E.I. at Halifax, 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 28
Halifax at Cape Breton, 7 p.m.
- Friday, Dec. 30
Cape Breton at Halifax, 7 p.m.

SCORING

	GP	G	A	PTS
Z. O'BRIEN, BAT.	39	31	35	66
Y. GOURDE, VIC.	36	21	43	64
S. TRUDEAU, BAT.	40	18	45	63
M. GRIGORENKO, QUE.	36	25	33	58
M. BISSONNETTE, BAT.	40	30	27	57
Z. PHILLIPS, S.J.	32	19	35	54
B. DUFFY, P.E.I.	36	20	32	52
A. MALLETT, RIM.	39	20	32	52
D. GAUTHIER, S.J.	37	31	20	51
F. ROY, QUE.	35	16	35	51

NBL of Canada

STANDINGS

	W	L	Pct	GB
LONDON	12	3	.800	—
QUEBEC	12	5	.706	1.0
HALIFAX	8	4	.667	2.5
SAINT JOHN	8	8	.500	4.5
OSHAWA	6	11	.353	7.0
SUMMERSIDE	5	10	.333	7.0
MONCTON	2	12	.143	9.5

UPCOMING GAMES

- Friday, Dec. 23
Halifax at Quebec, 8:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 24
Halifax at Oshawa, 6 p.m.
- Sunday, Jan. 1
Halifax at Oshawa, 8 p.m.

Help in the net

The Mooseheads have brought in Jason Ellis from Cole Harbour's major midjet team to shore up their goaltending depth.

- The 17-year-old from Lantz will likely join Marc-Olivier Daigle for games Dec. 27, 28 and 30 with Zach Fucile away at the world under-17 and Anthony Terenzio out with a concussion.

Herd loses Frk for duration of world juniors

Martin Frk is ineligible to play in the Halifax Mooseheads' next three games due to an agreement between the Canadian Hockey League and the International Ice Hockey Federation.

Frk, who has appeared in the Mooseheads' past seven games after sitting out the entire season with a concussion, decided not to attend the IIHF world junior cham-

pionship — despite being named to the Czech Republic's roster — because he is still a long way from being in game shape.

But the CHL-IIHF agreement dictates he can't play for Halifax while the WJC is being played. The Mooseheads play Dec. 27, 28 and 30.

"It's a rule, there's no fighting it, there's no trying

to find a happy medium," said Mooseheads general manager Cam Russell. "It's just an agreement the CHL and the IIHF have. We're not going to contest it."

The rule helps prevent CHL teams from holding players back from the WJC.

Despite the news, Russell said not going to the WJC is the "right decision" for Frk, who he said "just isn't

ready" to play at that level. Frk has been sluggish since his return, with just one goal in seven games.

The 18-year-old winger is considered a first- or second-round prospect for the 2012 NHL draft. He had three goals and three assists for the Czech Republic as an under-age player at last year's world junior.

● MATTHEW WUEST



► Rainmen guard Justin Johnson.

Away for the holidays

► Rainmen face challenging road games on Friday night and Christmas Eve


MATTHEW WUEST
@METRONEWS.CA

So *this* is Christmas for the Halifax Rainmen.

Riding a five-game winning streak that has pushed them to third in the National Basketball League of Canada standings, the Rainmen have embarked on a difficult road trip that sees them visit the Quebec Kebs on Friday night and the Oshawa Power on Christmas Eve.

Rather than lament the unfortunate timing of the trip, the Rainmen are taking it as an opportunity to show they're for real.



RYAN TAPLIN/METRO FILE

"We all would like to be at home for Christmas, but once you are working, once you are playing, I think everything is out of your mind. You give the team what it needs."

RAINMEN HEAD COACH JOSEP (PEP) CLAROS

"It is a good challenge to see how tough we are," said Rainmen head coach Josep (Pep) Claros. "If we are a team that is going to complain because it's Christmas, or because we have two games in a row, or because we have to fly (from Quebec to Oshawa) with four hours sleep. ... Or if we're (a team) tough enough to show we want to win those games."

The game against the second-place Kebs is of particular importance. The Rainmen beat the Kebs 97-83 in their last meeting on Dec. 10 but have a 2-3 record against teams with records of .500 or better.

The Kebs (12-5) just added point guard Cedric Moodie and are considered a league favourite along with the 12-3 London Lightning.

"They're a big team with a lot of experience, athleticism, shooters, scorers. ... They've got everything," Claros said. "We have to play perfect on defence and we really have to rebound or it will be impossible to win."

The Rainmen are flying back to Halifax early on Christmas Day and have three full days off, resuming practice on Dec. 28.

Not merry. In Montreal



► Canadiens goaltender Carey Price reaches for a rebound as defenceman Tomas Kaberle defends Jets forward Tanner Glass in Winnipeg on Thursday night.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jets don't let Habs up off mat

Blake Wheeler had two goals and an assist to spark the Winnipeg Jets to a 4-0 victory over the Montreal Canadiens on Thursday night. Winnipeg goalie Ondrej Pavelec stopped 27 shots for his third shutout of the season. Montreal goaltender Carey Price made 30 saves, but the Canadiens suffered their fifth straight defeat.

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Schwartz moving past the pain

► Canadian captain focused on gold after missing majority of 2011 WJC and losing sister to leukemia shortly after

Jaden Schwartz played through pain at last year's world junior hockey championship, before having to watch from the sidelines.

This time, the 19-year-old from Wilcox, Sask., will look to set the tone throughout the tournament as Canadian captain.

Schwartz is one of four players on this year's team

that had to settle for silver at the 2011 world junior tournament in Buffalo, N.Y.

But Schwartz wasn't able to finish that tournament. He fractured his left ankle during Canada's second game, yet still had a goal and two assists in a 7-2 win over the Czech Republic.

Schwartz didn't play an-

other game after that though, and watched the gold-medal game from the sidelines. Canada led 3-0 heading into the third period, but Russia exploded for five goals to take the title.

"Last year was tough, obviously getting hurt and then that third period against Russia," Schwartz said.

"This year is a whole new group of guys, new faces, new team and everything like that. There's enough motivation just being here. We're all here to win gold and that's the bottom line."

The St. Louis Blues prospect seems older than 19, perhaps because he has a perspective on life that his teammates don't.

His sister Mandi, a hockey player at Yale, died April 3 of leukemia at the age of 23. She was fighting for her life in Wilcox while Schwartz was with the Canadian team in Buffalo.

When Schwartz arrived at the Regina airport after the tournament, Mandi was there to meet him and Schwartz hung his silver

medal around her neck.

"She was pretty sick at that time," Schwartz said.

"It was the hardest thing I had to go through and probably one of the hardest things I'll ever go through. It's very difficult, but family and friends get you through times like that and thankfully they're always there for me." **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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Cardinals, Beltran have deal

Two years for reported \$26M US

Carlos Beltran and the World Series champion St. Louis Cardinals agreed to a two-year contract pending results of a physical, a move that would fortify the team's lineup following the departure of Albert Pujols. The team disclosed the agreement Thursday night and said it expects to make a formal announcement shortly after the holidays. KMOX, the Cardinals' flagship radio station, reported the deal is for \$26 million US over two years

— the same figure cited by a person familiar with the negotiations who spoke to The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because financial details of the agreement were not announced. The 34-year-old Beltran batted .300 with 22 home runs, 84 RBIs and a .385 on-base percentage for the New York Mets and San Francisco Giants this year. He likely will be the opening-day right fielder for the Cardinals next season.

Lance Berkman is expected to move to first base, taking Pujols' spot. Beltran and Berkman are switch-hitters, giving new manager Mike Matheny lineup flexibility. Earlier this month, St. Louis re-signed shortstop Rafael Furcal to a \$14-million, two-year contract and added left-handed reliever J.C. Romero with a \$750,000, one-year deal. The Cardinals appear to need only a few spare parts to finalize the roster.

After Pujols signed a \$254-million, 10-year contract with the Los Angeles Angels, Cardinals chairman Bill DeWitt Jr. said he expected his team's payroll to perhaps exceed this year's total of \$110 million. Allen Craig, coming off an impressive post-season, gives the Cardinals another strong option in the outfield but will miss at least the first month of the season while recovering from knee surgery.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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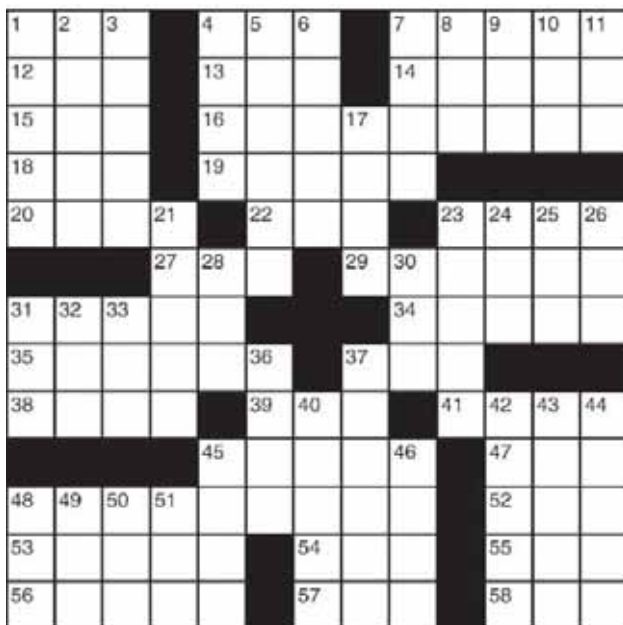
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14 Crosswise, nautically
15 Historic time
16 Four-line verses
18 Atmosphere
19 Seafood entree
20 Dog bane?
22 Very long time
23 Former frosh
27 Needlefish
29 There
31 Perfect
34 Perspectives
35 With 48-Across, "Family Feud" material
37 Bankroll
38 Oliver Twist's request
39 Clean Air Act org.
41 Send forth
45 Plifered
47 Inseparable
48 See 35-Across
52 "Monty Python" opener
53 Pianist Eubie
54 Young seal
55 Prepared
56 Disrobe
57 Pigpen
58 Attempt
- Down**
1 Wheat bundle
2 Danger
3 Cognizant
4 Cookouts, for short
5 UFO, maybe



- 6 Guitarist once wed to Xavier Cugat
7 Difficult
8 "The — Daba Hon-ey-moon"
9 Island garland
10 Forefront
11 Typog-raphy units
17 Broadway prize
21 Tequila source
23 Insinuating
24 "— on a Grecian Urn"
25 Church seat
26 Storefront sign abbr.

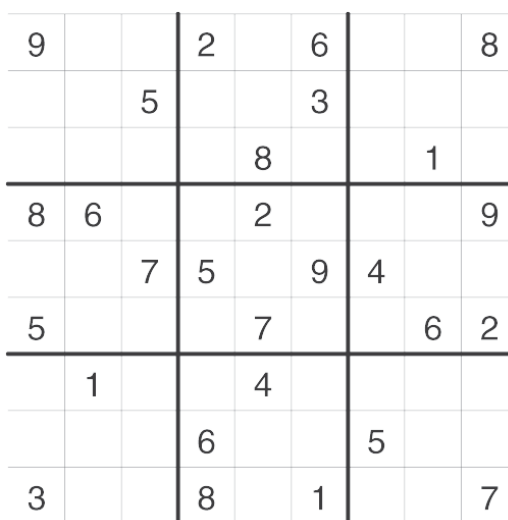
- 28 Hearty brew
30 Eggs
31 Doctrine
32 Pair with an air
33 Mess up
36 Abominable Snow-man
37 Reddish brown
40 Tires (out)
42 Wettish
43 Bury
44 Irascible
45 Dance lesson
46 Catch sight of
48 Brady and Brees, for ex.

- 49 Last (Abbr.)
50 Listener
51 Tackle moguls

▶ Yesterday's answer



Sudoku



How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

8	3	5	6	2	7	1	9	4
1	2	9	3	8	4	6	5	7
6	4	7	5	1	9	3	8	2
4	1	8	9	5	6	7	2	3
7	6	3	8	4	2	5	1	9
9	5	2	1	7	3	4	6	8
2	9	6	4	3	1	8	7	5
3	8	1	7	9	5	2	4	6
5	7	4	2	6	8	9	3	1

Send a KISS

You can now post your kiss, and read even more kisses, online at metronews.ca/kiss.

*Me (D.B. my wish)
I bet a lot of us hoped to received a similar message. Apologies are always welcome no matter what, and it's never too late for it. A simple lie might seem innocent at first, but when discovered can hurt a lot, way too much. So many things I should have said, so many questions that haven't been answered and it's probably why I can hardly move on. Merry Christmas xoxoxo*
FROM MISSY

*Missed Connection
May joy & goodwill be your gift on your birthday (The 29TH). May this Christmas day... be as special as you are to me! Wishing you a very heartfelt X Mas & wonderful New Year.*
FROM SECRET CRUISE

Today's horoscope

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 You will be thinking a lot about your work and your reputation over the next few days.
♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 If someone says you should not be concerned about what is going on in your immediate environment that means you should be very concerned indeed.
♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 It would appear that you have been worrying about your money situation for no good reason and over the next few days you will see solutions where before you saw only problems.
♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 You are in two minds whether to get in-

volved in a feud that is really none of your business.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug. 23 This is the ideal time to think of ways to reduce your chores and improve your health.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24-Sept. 22 Your confidence is improving by the hour and it won't be long before your more positive attitude brings some seriously encouraging results.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 You may find it hard to ask for assistance but ask you must because if you go it alone over the holiday period you could find yourself in a bit of a muddle.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 The approaching new moon makes it

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

easier for you to express yourself — and easier for others to understand what it is you are trying to say.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 Good news from afar will cheer you up today, not least because it means you could make a lot of money.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 You are on the cusp of a positive phase.

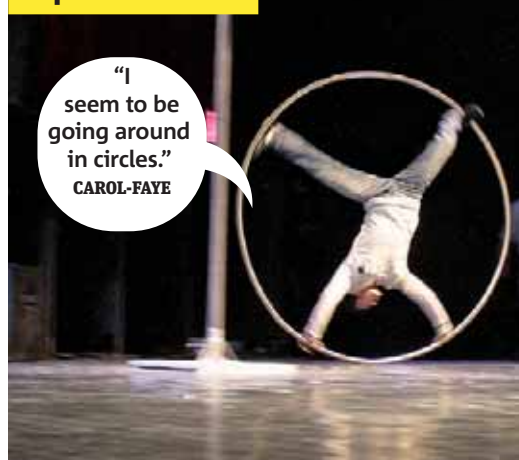
♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 Don't snap at people who try to cheer you up — they mean well.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20. This is a good day to contact friends and relatives and plan a get-together for between now and the end of the year.

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 You will be thinking a lot about your work and your reputation over the next few days.

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Caption contest



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LOOK AGAIN SPOT THE 10 DIFFERENCES IN THESE TWO IMAGES.

Montreal, Quebec – One fun thing leads to another as the shockingly powerful, ridiculously fuel-efficient 2012 Chevrolet Sonic hatch and sedan hit the downtown streets. As for sibling rivalry? Let's just say it's a good thing they're both confident in the looks department.



1. Removed street sign above the 2012 Chevrolet Sonic 5-door. 2. Removed building decor from right side of corner building. 3. Changed colour of building sign to yellow. 4. Added stripe to sweater. 5. Added a sign onto the patio wall. 6. Switched the direction of the patio lamp above the 2012 Chevrolet Sonic 5-door. 7. Removed building decor from right side of corner building. 8. Removed a green flag from the hanging line. 9. Added building decor to left side of corner building. 10. Removed streetlight from right side of image.



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